

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Technology in Kentucky Schools – the Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.160(1), KRS 156.160(3), KRS 156.166, KRS 156.166(7), KRS 156.670, KRS 156.670(1), KRS 156.670(3), KRS 156.670(4), KRS 156.670(7), KRS 157.330

History/Background:

KETS Master Plan

KETS Phase 1 – Laying the foundation

As part of education reform, the General Assembly provided legislative authority and funding for substantial investment in the area of education technology. The formal implementation of Kentucky's education technology program began in 1992 with the adoption of Kentucky's Master Plan for Education Technology by the Kentucky Board of Education. The Master Plan for Education Technology is incorporated by reference into 701 KAR 5:110 and is in compliance with KRS 156.160(1).

The KETS Master Plan describes how technology will be used to improve teaching and learning. Its goals are to ensure equal access to technology, to empower teachers and students to use technology and to prepare Kentucky's children to work in the Information Age.

KETS Phase 1 was fully funded with a \$620M investment over 8 years for all components of the technology program.

KETS Phase 2 – Sustaining the investment

The Master Plan for Education Technology underwent a major revision from 2001-2006. It highlighted accomplishments, priorities for the next six years, and the resources needed for ongoing implementation. It addressed issues such as technological equity, standards-based planning, and accountability.

KETS received \$420M during Phase 2 of the program. These funds were used to support operations, maintenance and incremental replacement of aging devices. In spite of the substantial financial investment, full funding of the KETS program fell short by \$300M during Phase 2.

KETS Phase 3 – Alignment with instruction

The Office of Education Technology and its school partners are developing a new version of the KETS Master Plan for 2007-2012.

The KETS Phase 3 Master Plan will be brought to the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) in August. It will differ from previous versions in two respects:

- There has been extensive Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and district leadership input. Input was requested from every KDE office with a focus on the question, “What are the big things we are trying to achieve educationally and how can technology assist us in meeting those objectives?” Input was also requested from superintendents and a broad representation of district staff, such as finance officers, curriculum supervisors, facility managers, chief information officers, and health staff. Additionally, focus groups were held to solicit input.
- The plan is very focused on objectives that also have a technology component.

Components of the KETS program

Unmet Need

Unmet need is a fundamental measure of progress in achieving the goals of the KETS program. It is defined as the difference between a district's current technology capability and the goals established in the KETS Master Plan.

Offer of Assistance

Offers of assistance are the portion of KETS funds allocated for distribution to each district. Offers are distributed on a per pupil basis, determined by the prior year average daily attendance (ADA).

In order to receive an offer of assistance, the district must match the state offer, dollar for dollar. Districts can match KETS Offers of Assistance using local resources, donations, grants, and some federal program funds (depending on the requirements of the federal program). Districts that are unable to match all or a portion of an offer may escrow those funds for a maximum of three years. When matching funds are available, part or all of the offer may be claimed by the district.

Progress Reporting

The Annual District Technology Readiness Survey measures district readiness to implement new large-scale technology applications (e.g., online testing, Encyclomedia, Internet 2, Knowledge Portal). The main areas of need identified from the survey are student workstations, network capacity and local district staff capability to implement and support new applications.

The MUNIS Technology Activity Report is an annual report used by KDE to track and monitor district progress in acquiring technology products and services during the previous

fiscal year. The information for this report is obtained through the MUNIS financial system that is located in every district.

Discounted Shared Services

The use of district and state shared services is based on the proven concept that aggregating and leveraging needs for procurement will substantially reduce costs and secure higher levels of service. Similarly, service delivery structured on aggregated need reduces administrative and staffing costs associated with delivery and support of those services over time. The KETS Master Plan calls for the use of shared services as a resource management strategy at both the state and district levels. Shared services at the state level include customer relationship and resource management, student technology leadership program, Kentucky Virtual High School and Library, electronic mail, network management, help desk, virus protection, financial management system (MUNIS) software and support, student information system software and support, etc. Shared services at the district level include technology resource teachers, workstation repair, technology acquisition, etc.

The Kentucky Virtual High School and Virtual Library, both supported in part by the KETS program, provide instructional resources not normally available to school districts. This includes sharing teachers (e.g., AP instructors) and instructional content across multiple school districts at the same time. This instructional delivery mechanism goes far beyond what is normally available in the traditional library and classroom.

Architecture and product standards

The KETS Master Plan is based on an enterprise design where all districts work toward common objectives. Standards are established for commonly used products in order to ensure (1) the highest possible level of interoperability, (2) a consistent look on workstations across the state, (3) minimal retraining when staff move between schools or districts, (4) lower levels of annual support required after implementation and (5) maximum value of KETS funds by leveraging the purchasing power and weight of the entire enterprise. Enterprise standards have been adopted for items such as workstations, file servers, printers, proxy software, firewall software, routers, etc.

Improvements for the 2006-2008 Biennium Budget

Renewing the Infrastructure

Kentucky Education Network - \$8.9 million in bond funds were appropriated by the General Assembly for a high-speed education telecommunications network that supports a set of seamless P-16 management, instructional and research applications. Hardware devices and software will include communication and network management and security devices such as routers, firewalls, and packet shapers.

\$5.3 million in FY '07 and \$15.3 million in FY '08 were appropriated by the General Assembly as operating funds for this project. Virtual learning and other computer-based instructional applications, Internet 2, Encyclomedia, the Knowledge Management Portal, and

on-line assessment will continue to increase the demand for network capacity and is critical to the success of those initiatives.

The Secretary of the Education Cabinet, the Commissioner of the Department of Education, the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Executive Director of the Education Professional Standards Board shall submit a coordinated implementation plan with timelines and regular progress reports to the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue. All expenditures require the prior approval of the Secretary of the Finance and Administration Cabinet.

Education Technology Pool - \$50 million in bond funds were appropriated by the General Assembly for an education technology pool. Discussion during the legislative session by legislators referenced an intent to provide modern workstations, stationary or mobile for public K-12 schools with these funds.

Improving the operation of education

Student Information System - \$10 million in bond funds were appropriated by the General Assembly to provide a functionally-robust and modern system to ensure the efficient collection and management of student information, including a unique student identifier, at the school, district and state levels. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is currently posted seeking qualified respondents for this system through a competitive solicitation.

On-line Assessment - KDE will continue to offer on-line CATS testing for special populations next year and may add a pilot of on-line CATS testing for general population students as well as on-line end-of-course assessments. This foundation will enable progress toward the future implementation of a web-based, on-line testing program that provides quicker turnaround of test results, student accountability, and assessment integration.

Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) Study – The General Assembly has directed a study of the costs, benefits, feasibility, and implications of adoption of specifications for statewide education data. The Schools Interoperability Framework, SIF, is designed to facilitate the exchange of information among different instructional and administrative software applications at the local, state, and federal levels. The study must be completed no later than November 1, 2006, with a final written report to be delivered to the Interim Joint Committee on Education.

Transforming instruction

Kentucky Instructional Data System (KIDS) – KIDS is to be funded by a \$5.8M federal grant awarded by the US Dept. of Education to develop a longitudinal student database. The KIDS project is under way now and will allow educators to look at educational progress over time at the student, class, school, and district level.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

The equity and access issues related to the distribution of technology funds and implementation of KETS standards in an efficient and timely manner are important to continue to address if every child in every school in every school district is to achieve at the proficient level.

Contact Person:

Robin Kinney, Associate Commissioner
Office of Internal Administration and Support
(502) 564-1976
Robin.Kinney@education.ky.gov

Robin Morley, Director
Division of Project Management
Office of Internal Administration and Support
(502) 564-4474
Robin.Morley@education.ky.gov

David Couch, Associate Commissioner
Office of Education Technology
(502) 564-2020
David.Couch@education.ky.gov

Deputy Commissioner

Commissioner of Education

Date:

June 2006